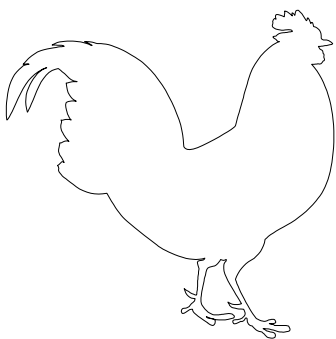




Sanitizing Poultry Drinking Water



Pure water is essential for poultry health and production. Slime in the drinking trough may cause lowered egg production or occasional mild diarrhea, especially in caged hens. Sodium hypochlorite, commonly used as a laundry bleach, is effective in sanitizing poultry drinking water. Hypochlorite sanitation—called superchlorination—will control water trough slime. It also provides some control of nitrates and nitrites by oxidation. Hypochlorite is readily available, inexpensive and safe. One gallon of bleach will effectively sanitize up to 17,500 gallons of drinking water with a chlorine level of 3 parts per million (ppm). Levels between 50 and 100 ppm are well-tolerated.

To control water trough slime, first clean equipment such as troughs or drinking cups. Then prepare a stock solution of 1½ ounces of bleach per gallon of water. Add 1 ounce of the stock solution per gallon of water at the input station.

Avoid starting a flock on high chlorine levels. This could cause birds to cut back on water intake, resulting in lowered egg production. Begin with a 3 to 5 ppm chlorine concentration at the input station. Gradually increase to 20 ppm at the input station, a level needed to control trough slime. The chlorine residual at the trough overflow will then be about 5 ppm.

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